

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

CHANGING U.S. STRATEGY IN SOUTH AMERICA: ADJUSTING AND EXPORTING PLAN COLOMBIA

by

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ABSTRACT

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This paper proposes the re-alignment of the current U.S. strategy to defeat narcoterrorism in South America. According to the COMUSSOUTHCOM, "we are at a critical point where eliminating tension and fostering democracies could be at risk if we allow our attention in another region to ignore the fact we live in this hemisphere and its prosperity is paramount to our national security." A joint effort by the U.S. and Colombia, called Plan Colombia, is attempting to eradicate this threat in Colombia. The United States must recognize that it cannot achieve the national ends delineated in its National Drug Strategy and Strategy for Combating Terrorism unless it approaches the solution in a comprehensive, multilateral approach with their South American partners. The solution outlined in this paper provides a unified effort, built on the success of Plan Colombia and modified to develop a balanced approach to achieve the goals of Drugs, Development and Democracy. To ensure a common vision of the problem narcoterrorism is defined as the melding of drug lords, insurgents and terrorist. An explanation of Plan Colombia points out the exportable successes that provide the basis for an adjusted strategy. To better propagate the new strategy, short falls identified in the ways and means of the U.S. National Strategies on Drugs and Combating Terrorism are incorporated into a solution and formulated around the combating terrorism framework of the 4D's (Deny, Diminish, Defeat, and Defend). This not only assures a detailed solution, but also synergy between the two national strategies. Inside this blueprint is a discussion of the specific ways and means to achieve the end of narcoterrorism and an analysis of hurdles and risks to be mitigated to ensure success.

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CHANGING U.S. STRATEGY IN SOUTH AMERICA: ADJUSTING AND EXPORTING PLAN COLOMBIA

INTRODUCTION

A symbiotic relationship between narcotics traffickers, insurgents and terrorists continues to grow in several areas of the world. This association, labeled narcoterrorism, utilizes profits from drug sales to finance the insurgencies and terrorist organizations that undermine democracies and inflict terrorism throughout the globe. Today, international concern with this phenomenon focuses mainly on two prominent areas: Afghanistan and the Andean region of South America. In each of these areas narcoterrorism threatens fragile democracies and contains the potential to export transnational terror to both their own hemisphere and the world. In South America a joint effort by the U.S. and Colombia is attempting to eradicate this threat.

To combat narcoterrorism the United States and Colombia established a bi-lateral effort called Plan Colombia in 2000. The plan combines the efforts of counter-drug operations and development programs in order to eradicate coca cultivation bring greater economic prosperity to the people, and to restore the people's confidence in Colombia's democratic institutions.¹ The plan, initially started under the Clinton Administration, is an integral part of the Bush Administration's National Drug Strategy.² Plan Colombia is achieving measurable success in Colombia. Unfortunately, narcoterrorism in South America is not isolated to just Colombia.

As former Defense Secretary William S. Cohen declared at the 4th Defense Ministerial of the Americas in October of 2000, narcoterrorism and its ties to insurgent forces continues to "grow like a cancer throughout the Andean region."³ Along with Colombia, narcoterrorism either directly or indirectly affects every country in South America. No country is immune from the potential abuse of its land or infrastructure to illegally import and export drugs, weapons, terror or all three. The principal organizations involved in narcoterror in the region are the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), National Liberation Army (ELN), United Self-Defense Forces (AUC) working predominantly in Colombia but with access and influence in Brazil, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Panama and a resurgent Sendero Luminoso in Peru.⁴ Their continued existence and expansion in the region not only adversely affects fragile democracies, but also stunts the economic growth of an area the U.S. relies on for critical trade abroad.

The U.S. is fighting today with great resolve to defeat terrorism in the Muslim world. But, is the U.S. government adequately addressing the question in its own backyard? GEN James T. Hill, Commander, United States Southern Command (COMUSOUTHCOM) warned the Senate during his June 2003 testimony, "we are at a critical point where eliminating tension and

fostering democracies could be at risk if we allow our attention in another region to ignore the fact we live in this hemisphere and its prosperity is paramount to our national security.”⁵

WHAT IS THE ROAD AHEAD?

The U.S. National Drug Strategy’s success is based on a three-pronged approach that simultaneously addresses the challenges of goals Drugs, Development and Democracy. Yet, the focus of the current administration is almost exclusively on drug eradication. The key to balancing the strategy is reinforcing the ways and means utilized to accomplish the goals of Development and Democracy.

To attain this result the U.S. should develop a comprehensive strategy -- built on lessons learned from Plan Colombia, incorporating the means outlined in both the National Drug Strategy and National Strategy to Combat Terrorism - - in a partnership with South America, not just Colombia. Equally demanding for the administration will be winning political support both at home and abroad for financial means. The administration must convince the American people that winning the War on Drugs is a component of winning the Global War on Terrorism and that it is in the United States’ national interest to do it without delay. A failure to act now could undermine any current success and leave a more complicated, widespread and imbedded problem for the future. The countries of South America are ripe for action and U.S. willingness to ally with them can be the catalyst to an effective resolution of the problem.

This paper will examine how the U.S and its South American partners can eradicate narcoterrorism utilizing the successful aspects of Plan Colombia to develop a more balanced approach. Following an examination of the genesis of the relationship between drugs, insurgents and terrorist and present scope of narcoterrorism in the region, the paper will frame the argument by addressing Plan Colombia, outlining its successes and identifying where the U.S. government’s ways and means fall short to achieve ends outlined in the National Strategies on Drugs and Combating Terrorism. Then it provides an analysis of how we can fix the problem by framing a solution around a comprehensive, multilateral approach and articulating the solution around the 4D’s outlined in the National Strategy for Combating Terrorism: Deny, Diminish, Defeat, and Defend. The specific means available to ensure success include both key successes in Plan Colombia, reinforcing resources such as the Free Trade of the Americas Act, the U.S. government’s Millennium Challenge development account and mutually supporting democratic and security efforts. The paper then concludes with a brief analysis of the potential hurdles and risks to the strategy.

THE GENESIS AND SCOPE OF NARCOTERROR

The Andean region has been fertile ground for narcoterrorism since the early 1980s. The insurgent Sendero Luminoso utilized class-consciousness, social resentment and ties to the Medellin drug cartel to incite violence and terror on the people of Peru. Each side profited from the destabilization of local governments and society. This initial marriage of insurgents and drug lords was one of convenience and represents the birth of narcoterrorism.⁶

DEFINING NARCOTERRORISM

By the 1990s as the War on Drugs became a household word in America, the accepted definition of narcoterrorism centered on the union of drug cartels and Marxist terrorists to achieve their common goal of destabilizing Latin American society. Drug king pins utilized this instability to secure their exportation of drugs from the coca growing regions, while terrorists gained access to weapons and continued success toppling governments. Regardless of the reason, "the combination of terror tactics and drug money permeated Latin American society because of the keen interest they equally share in destabilizing governments and breaking down social order. Although each side ultimately sought different ends, in the short term each benefited from their association."⁷

According to Dr. Max Manwaring of the U.S. Army War College's Strategic Studies Institute, narcoterrorism actually "encompasses an unholy trinity of three ongoing simultaneous and interrelated wars involving the illegal drug industry, various insurgent organizations, and vigilante paramilitary groups."⁸ Each of these groups utilizes narcotics as the economic basis to fund their organizations. They employ terrorism as their primary tactic to achieve their goals and they work together to advance their aims. The arrest of "Fernandillo", Brazil's top drug lord, while serving as a major drug trader for the FARC is an indicator of these relationships.⁹

Essentially, they are seamless organizations in a unified effort to sustain their war on legitimacy with no regard for borders, national and local governments or the law. Dr. Manwaring warns, "this trinity of non-state actors is perpetrating a level of corruption, criminality, human horror, and internal and external instability that –if left unchecked at the strategic level- it can ultimately threaten the survival of each of the democratic states in the Andean region."¹⁰

FRAMING THE ARGUMENT

The United States' answer to combating drugs and terror in Colombia is Plan Colombia. This partnership with Colombia was created to provide a basis for executing a comprehensive strategy to eradicate the drug trade that plagues Colombia, and to provide a catalyst for regional and international support. In July 2002, the United States acknowledged the need to treat

insurgents, terrorist and narco-traffickers in Colombia as a unified effort. This allowed officials to use U.S. funding to combat the trinity defined by Dr. Manwaring.¹¹ Despite this accommodation and additional financial support to neighboring countries (Brazil, Bolivia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Panama and Peru), the U.S. focus remains drug eradication.

WHAT IS PLAN COLOMBIA?

Plan Colombia utilizes four ways resourced by various means to achieve the eradication of drugs. They are “reducing the production and distribution of drugs, strengthening public institutions, revitalizing the economy of Colombia and advancing the Colombia peace process.”¹²

The means utilized to achieve these ways are plentiful and diverse when we look at the breath of Plan Colombia.

To achieve the goal of reducing the production and distribution of illegal drugs the government set a goal to reduce drugs by 50 percent over 5 years (2000-05). Their means included destruction of known coca crops through aerial spraying, providing alternative crop programs for peasants, increasing illegal drug seizures and destroying the infrastructure used by drug traffickers. To build and strengthen public institutions and increase state presence, thought Colombia, the country reformed the judicial system, combats corruption and restructures and modernizes Colombia's Armed forces. To revitalize the economy Colombia works to create new employment expanded international trade and increased foreign investment. Special care was also afforded the disenfranchised peasant through government funded social safety net programs for the poorest and most vulnerable members of Colombian society.¹³

Accordingly, Plan Colombia also adheres to the 4D approach by defeating narcoterrorists, denying them sanctuary, diminishing the underlying conditions that allow them to prosper and defends its citizens from the thugs that prey on Colombian society.¹⁴

Does Plan Colombia Work

Plan Colombia is working. In the first two years the Colombia realized a net reduction of 37% of coca production. Based on aerial spraying executed in FY 2003, Colombia believes it will reduce the total hectares under cultivation by 50% from last year and achieve a total reduction of 69% since the plan's inception (Figure 1).¹⁵

Coca Cultivation in Colombia

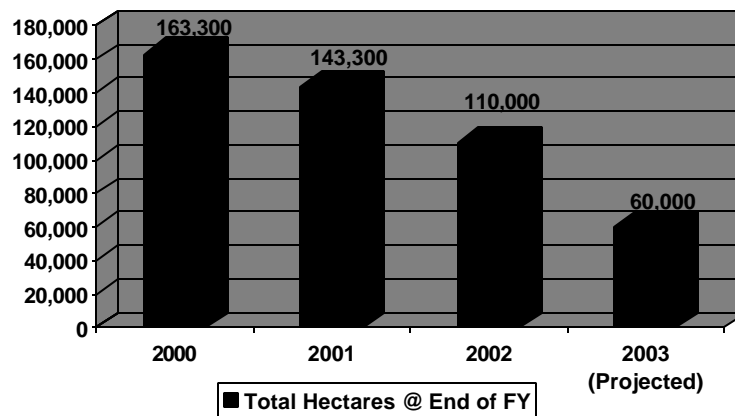


FIGURE 1¹⁶

Additionally, there are successes in interdiction with over \$3 Billion in illegal drugs seized, 1,000 coca laboratories destroyed along with billions of gallons of chemicals used to manufacture cocaine. To combat narcotic's operations Colombia trained 60% more combat-ready troops including 3 U.S. trained anti-narcotics brigades and 5 Riverine brigades. The most promising aspect of the plan is the participation of 22,829 families in the alternative crop development programs adding up to 24,549 hectares of legal crops supported by infrastructure, agricultural and financial support.¹⁷

Plan Colombia continues to strengthen and increase the presence of public institutions throughout the country. This kind of progress is directly responsible in the first half of 2003 for a decline in terrorist acts by 53%, homicides by 45%, kidnappings by 34% and massacres attributed to narcoterrorists by 45%. The means utilized to achieve these results includes: training and equipping 78,000 new police officers, growing the Armed forces of Colombia by 126,000 troops, modernizing the military, improving military accountability, increased human rights training and the creation of a National Human Rights Unit and numerous improvements strengthening the judicial system of the country. The incalculable benefit of all these

improvements is the increased credibility the Colombian government gains daily with the people of Colombia.¹⁸

The Colombian economy is also improving at the same promising rate as its security. The GDP continues to grow. According to the Colombian government, the “first quarter 2003 numbers were an impressive 3.8%, above the government’s target of 3.1% and significantly above the annual growth rates of 1.4% in 2001 and 1.7% in 2002.”¹⁹ The Andean Trade Preference Act (ATPA) works to stimulate the Colombian economy and reduce unemployment by providing increased trade, jobs and wealth to the nation. These increases along with the inception of social programs focused on families, youth, jobs and education continue to create the conditions for sustained growth and growing prosperity for all.²⁰

The successes realized in Colombia are the result of an effort to execute a comprehensive plan. Yet, the priority of the strategy is total hectares of coca eradicated. It is fair to say the U.S. / Colombia strategy is overly focused on drug eradication versus development and democracy. Still, there are plenty of positive aspects of the plan in all areas to emulate throughout the region. If the intent is to export this strategy, there will need to be a shift in priorities as the governments move to execute it in a multi-lateral approach. An analysis of the current National Drug Strategy and the National Strategy for Combating Terrorism can provide the best way to do this.

ANALYZING OUR NATIONAL STRATEGIES

The U.S. / Colombian policymaking approach has created problems. Plan Colombia is a U.S. / Colombia plan. No other South American partners were consulted nor coordinated with before or after its adoption. The same level of involvement is also true for the Organization of American States (OAS), the key regional alliance of which the U.S., Colombia and its neighbors are members.²¹ To amplify the problems consider the monetary support outlined in the plan. Of the initial appropriations of \$1.3 billion, Colombia received 65% (\$841.3 million) of the support, while only 35% (\$458.7 million) was dedicated to aiding her six Andean neighbors.²² The Bush administration nearly tripled their funding in the FY 02 in an attempt to assist Colombia’s neighbors through its Andean Regional Initiative. However, the neighboring countries share was \$401.8 million that is disproportionate when compared to Colombia’s total aid of \$380.5 million.²³ The imbalance still continues today. The request for FY 04 asks for a total of \$990.7 million with \$573 million earmarked for Colombia and the remaining \$417.7 million for her neighbors.²⁴

A good example of the inequities can be discerned by reading the FY 2004 National Drug Strategy. A high priority of the strategy, titled "Disrupting the Market", dedicates three full pages to enumerate how we implement the strategy in Colombia; yet, only four paragraphs (or two-thirds of a page) to the remainder of the region.

Additionally, as the strategy addresses the countries that border Colombia, it focuses exclusively on drug eradication. It touts, "support Plan Colombia by eradicating drugs or risk losing U.S. government assistance and economic aid".²⁵ The solutions for every nation are not simply tied to drug eradication. Recall the initial intent was to execute a comprehensive strategy. To gain their support, the U.S. should articulate and support ways that address the needs of these nations. Lasting solutions attack the ideological core of narcoterrorism and enhance the credibility of these democracies. Analyzing the Strategy for Combating Terrorism may help identify some ways and means available to the U.S. and its regional partners to accomplish their mutually desired goals.

What about our National Strategy to Combat Terrorism?

One asset now available to the U.S. is the blueprint laid out in the National Strategy to Combat Terrorism issued in September 2003. To succeed in combating narcoterrorism the revised strategy should effectively implement its goals of Defeat, Deny, Diminish and Defend (the 4 Ds). Utilizing this framework permits a better analysis of Plan Colombia. Another benefit will be the ability to synchronize the ways and means to ensure achievement of the National Drug Policy goals of Drugs, Development and Democracy (the 3 Ds) in the region.

The goals delineate an effective method to implement the programs that lead to success. Each goal outlines specific objectives, the resources needed to achieve them and who is responsible for the execution (Figure 2). These ways and means are the tools utilized in Plan Colombia, but as long as the focus is predominantly Colombia, the plan allows narcoterrorism freedom of maneuver in the remainder of the Andean and Amazon regions.



FIGURE 2²⁶

The Problem with Migration

The U.S - backed Plan Colombia is a success, in Colombia, but as Ecuadorian Foreign Minister Heinz Moeller noted, “the cancerous terror being removed from Colombia is metastasizing in Ecuador”²⁷ and there is evidence that this is true for other countries in the region. Bolivia’s failed “Dignity Plan” is tied to peasant coca cultivation and Colombian ELN factions.²⁸ Panama’s Darien province is dubbed an area of free rein for the AUC since Panama possesses no formal military to force them out.²⁹ The most stable democracy in the region, Brazil, is executing “Plan Cobra” to defend its border.³⁰ Even more troubling is President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela utilizing this situation to tout anti-American sentiment by establishing diplomatic contact with the FARC.³¹

Additionally, this nest of evil is aligning with other transnational threats. Russian organized crime (ROC) is tied to the narcoterrorists of the Andean region. Their partnership ensures the continued flow of arms and weapons to the Andean region and cocaine for distribution by ROC.

Europe is now the beneficiary of an estimated 35% of the cocaine coming out of Colombia, and ties to other organized crime syndicates seem to be prevalent.³²

More disconcerting is the establishment of support cells by Hezbollah, Hamas and Islamiyya a Gammat in Latin America. As funding sources and safe havens diminish for these groups throughout the world, the narcoterror organizations of the region are a logical source of monetary resources and access to the United States.³³ The infiltration of these and potentially more dangerous groups into the western hemisphere directly violate the goals of “defeating terrorists of global reach and denying them further support and sanctuary.”³⁴ Left unchecked, the potential for the resurgence of terrorist’s bases, like the ones erected in Afghanistan, is possible in this hemisphere. Narcoterrorists in the Andean region contain both the security and economic foundation to support this development.

General Hill agrees that Colombia’s neighbors cannot secure their borders. Despite his efforts to strengthen regional support, the level of assistance afforded in Plan Colombia in military aid, training and intelligence is not available to her neighbors.³⁵

FRAMING THE SOLUTION

President George W. Bush proclaimed in early 2001 “this is the Century of the Americas.” He promised the “blessings of liberty and economic growth to the hemisphere.”³⁶ The basic formulation of the strategy should start with the prototype Plan Colombia and enabled by adding resources focused on improving Development and Democracy. Though there is some opposition to aspects of the plan by Venezuela, Brazil and Ecuador, there is plenty of agreement by these countries that the plan is working in Colombia. The cornerstone of the plan must be economic and social development, with a coordinated security approach capitalizing on the successes in Colombia. The Expanded Authority for FY04 provided by the U.S. Congress acknowledging the linkage of insurgents and narcoterrorists allows executors the flexibility to focus resources based on the needs of a supported nation.³⁷ This is exactly the prescription needed to facilitate a balanced approach that brings liberty and economic growth to the region.

At the center of this approach is the establishment of a coalition of states built on a comprehensive strategy that directs all of the tools of government to a common goal: defeating narcoterrorism. To better facilitate framing the adjustments to the strategy and meeting the goal of providing synergy between the two National Strategies (for Drugs and Combating Terrorism), the proposal outlined below follows the 4 D (deny, diminish, defeat and defend) framework. The solutions include a strong partnership and regional leadership, socio-economic development, the strengthening of democracy in the region, continued effort for mutually supporting security

and the assembling of support from other world partners. Following the blueprint outlined in the following paragraphs can set the conditions for a successful coalition in the region.

MAKING IT WORK (DENY)

The U.S. can build on the desire of South American leaders to coordinate a regional approach. A previous attempt to develop Regional Narcotic Strategies attests to their will to work together. Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez proposed a NATO-like military alliance that garnered some regional support. Though not initially supported by Brazil, they are reconsidering their initial position. Despite President Chavez's early disagreements with Plan Colombia, there is evidence he now supports all facets of the Plan and open to a cooperative solution.³⁸ The momentum to build a coalition against narcoterrorism is growing now. The U.S. should take the initiative and use it wisely. The key to success will be input and coordination by, and in partnership with all members.

The binding organization to enact this new alliance against terror in the Americas can still be the Organization of American States (OAS). The OAS leads the world in cooperative agreements to combat terror, as well as, support for fledgling democracies throughout Latin America.

In 1998 an organization dedicated to prevent, combat, and eliminate terrorism; pursuant to the principles and purposes embodied in the Charter of the Organization of American States was established as the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE). The objectives of the CICTE are: 1) enhance the exchange of information on terrorism issues, 2) promote universal adherence to international counterterrorism conventions, 3) enhance border cooperation and security measures and 4) develop activities for training and crisis management.³⁹

The CICTE also participates routinely in the United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) attaining a high level of international legitimacy and support for their efforts over the last 15 years.

The conditions do exist to build the regional partnership sought by the OAS and necessary to synchronize the efforts of all stakeholders in the region. On July 10, 2003 the OAS ratified a treaty pledging each country's commitment against terrorism. The Inter-American Convention Against Terrorism, signed by the 33 OAS member states, seeks to prevent the financing of terrorist activities, strengthen border controls and increase law enforcement cooperation, among other measures. It calls terrorism "a serious threat to democratic values and to international peace and security."⁴⁰ Nations pledging their support include the United States and all of South America. This agreement is the foundation on which to establish a

coalition of the willing. Furthermore, supported by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373 and the UN international conventions and protocols against terrorism, the coalition can galvanize international cooperation, rally support and build a stronger international consortium to hold narcoterrorists accountable for their actions and defeat them.⁴¹

This clearly utilizes a stated means outlined in the 4Ds approach of the National Strategy for Combating Terrorism: build strong coalitions. Yet, the U.S must ensure they consider the concerns identified by their partners at the Miami conference in March of 2003 to ensure success.

The results emphasize 4 highly related needs and associated recommendations: 1) the need to advance hemispheric understanding of the security concerns of each country and those that the region as a whole faces (e.g., external and internal threat(s) to security), 2) the need to develop, multilateral civil-military structures and processes to identify and address threats in the contemporary security environment, 3) the need to foster expanded dialogue, consultations and cooperation for building consensus principles and concepts for regional security cooperation, and 4) the need to adapt U.S. military efficacy to the contemporary threat environment in the hemisphere at the strategic level.⁴²

It is prudent to recall the initial effort with Plan Colombia, whether intentional or not, was exclusionary of our OAS partners. These guidelines and the U.S. government's willingness to be an equal partner in this effort will set the conditions to build a credible coalition both regionally and internationally. The OAS will likely not deny who the regional hegemon is nor from whom must come the strategic leadership to accomplish these tasks. Nevertheless, it is in everyone's mutual interest to revitalize the strength of the OAS as an advantage to both combat terror and the socio-economic propaganda tactics utilized by narcoterrorists to sustain them in the region.

ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND LIBERTY FOR ALL (DIMINISH)

The means utilized in Plan Colombia to achieve lasting development through a revitalized economy includes expanding international trade, increasing foreign investment and creating new employment opportunities. The plan's ability to use government funded social safety net programs for disenfranchised peasants and the poorest members of society is vital to ensure prosperity reaches the most vulnerable citizens of these countries.⁴³ Executing this revised strategy requires effective use of every aspect of economic policy to strengthen markets, bring prosperity and alternative growth to the disenfranchised, stimulate additional financial support from global partners and gain cooperation to choke the monetary foundation of narcoterrorists organizations.

The passage the Free Trade of Americas Act (FTAA) , launched at the Quebec Summit of the Americas in April 2001, by January 2005 is vital to the success of this strategy. It is the catalyst for the entire socio-economic plan. The U.S Andean Trade Preference Act (ATPA) is a good start, but like Plan Colombia it is not holistic enough to meet the needs of the entire region.⁴⁴ As President Bush noted at the OAS summit in January 2002 and again in his January 2004 State of the Union address, "open trade and investment brings healthy, growing economies that serve the cause of democratic reform."⁴⁵ The results are evident in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru where two-way trade between with the U.S. has doubled. U.S. exports to ATPA countries increased 75 percent in dollar terms, with many of these exports serving as inputs to ATPA-qualifying products. United States imports from ATPA countries more than doubled, helping to create approximately 140,000 new, legitimate jobs in the region. These economic incentives helped boost alternative development and supports alternative crop and eradication programs, resulting in the elimination of over 1 million acres of coca between 1995 and 2000.⁴⁶ Though successful by some measures, bi-lateral agreements with these countries will not suffice. Sustained growth lies in the ability to provide common and equal access to all.

Lasting reform must grow from a plan that provides economic growth, prosperity and alternative development for the region's coca farmers and peasants. Promulgating the successful strategies in Plan Colombia can provide a source of hope to these peasants. The "Familias Guardabosques" (Family Forest Protection program) initiative and complementary family and agricultural action programs breed successes in Colombia.⁴⁷ These are subsidy-based programs that pay farmers to plant trees versus coca under the Andean Reforestation Plan. This and other alternative crop subsidy plans are supported by new infrastructure, social reform, and civil-military reform projects aimed at ensuring alternative crops gain market accessibility for peasant farmers. If the market doesn't provide the profit necessary to sustain compliance, then the subsidy programs like "Familias Guardabosques" act to adequately redistribute wealth and provide alternatives to cultivating coca for narcoterrorists.

To assist in this effort the U.S. can provide additional financial support by simplifying access to Millennium Challenge accounts. As *InterAction* concluded in a policy paper:

While it makes sense to focus on countries that fully meet these criteria, setting the bar too high could further alienate those facing the greatest challenges. If only the best performers are eligible to receive assistance, then aid will go to those who least need it. The Congress should provide the kind of flexibility in programming that enables quick and effective obligation of funds. If additional earmarks, restrictions and conditions are imposed, important opportunities for cooperation will be missed, and the transforming effect of the Millennium Challenge Account will have been negated.⁴⁸

While not a program specifically tied to Plan Colombia, the goals of Millennium Challenge are exactly what the socio-economic goals of the plan hope to achieve. A U.S. gesture of this magnitude could have a side benefit of stimulating international resolve and broadening the base of support for the modified strategy. The U.S. example could potentially gain additional financial support from both European and Asian nations proving beneficial to all parties through economic development and access to new markets. As all nations benefit, the impetus for support by the UN increases and opens access to ways and means it can provide.

One of the effective means a unified international community can bring to bear on narcoterrorism is cutting off their access to financial resources. UNSCR 1373 and 1377 provide the means and legitimacy to consolidate the world's banking and financial organizations into a cohesive juggernaut. Together, international partners can utilize the same tactics, techniques and procedures utilized to inhibit Al Qaeda's financial access to locate and inhibit narcoterrorists from their money. These institutions have the ability to freeze assets, confiscate profits and execute the entire gambit of financial counter-terror techniques throughout the world.⁴⁹

Sustaining Democracy

The will to preserve democracy throughout the region is strong. The support of all nations, except Venezuela, to the OAS Inter-American Democratic Charter in Lima, Peru on September 11, 2001, attests to a regional commitment to democracy. This may be a coalition of the weak, but certainly they are willing. To assist in strengthening democracies, exporting the programs and policies outlined in Plan Colombia provides the solutions needed to assist the weaker nations the region.

The ways in Plan Colombia that succeed are: building and strengthening public institutions, increasing state presence throughout the nation, a reforming systems that combat corruption and modernizing the nation's security forces.⁵⁰ The means proven successful includes: training and equipping new police forces, strengthening the judicial system, increasing human rights training, creating national human rights organizations, growing and modernizing military forces and holding accountable military, police and political leaders for their conduct and professionalism. Targeting these policies and programs to assist the specific needs of the supported country, can achieve the same levels of success as Colombia. Coupled with the socio-economic growth gained through the improved strategy, their effectiveness potentially increases exponentially and sustains the credibility a democracy requires to endure.

SYNCHRONIZE SECURITY AND SUPPORT (DEFEAT AND DEFEND)

A mutually supporting security effort is a solution to ensuring the preservation of democracy and continued socio-economic development in the region. Synchronizing their internal security effort and winning on the ground is still the responsibility of the sovereign nation. However, the coalition and specifically the U.S. still have a key role of providing crucial support.

Plan Colombia has a robust and effective security package. What the U.S. can do is utilize this blueprint to proportionally re-align funding and military support, in a coordinated, regional effort to reinforce each nation's security. The key elements that breed success in Colombia are military aid, training and intelligence from the U.S. The government can provide a proportionate increase in military aid, advisor and contractor support and a coordinated intelligence effort to the region. This is an increase above the levels presently authorized by the Congress' Expanded Authorization Act⁵¹ and will require further authorization and support. The COMUSSOUTHCOM will need to define the exact numbers, but given the success of Plan Colombia, it is reasonable to assume he can persuade Congress to support an increase for a multilateral-regional approach.

The U.S. can utilize the USSOUTHCOM commander and the already established Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-S) as its coordinating and leading mechanism. These organizations contain the expertise to synchronize civil, military and interagency support. COMUSSOUTHCOM is well acquainted with the region; he has established credibility with all our partners in the region and developed the contacts to have an immediate impact on security. "We must continue to build upon multilateral security cooperation with even more synchronization of effort. The U.S. government and U.S. Southern Command are currently working on initiatives to do just that-not only to exercise together, but also to operate together in order to shut down transnational threats." ⁵² As the COMUSSOUTHCOM stated in his recent testimony to the Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control, he is confident of his ability to maintain and build on those relationships.⁵³

HURDLES AND RISKS

The nations of South America are proud and independent. Their desire to ensure autonomy, influence and strength is an asset in any partnership. However, those same desires, in some countries, potentially become a liability. The desire of certain countries and leaders to minimize the influence and leadership of the U.S. in South America could create hurdles and

risks for support of a multilateral approach. The two most significant problems are MERCOSUR and the threat to democracy in Venezuela.

Brazil's leadership in MERCOSUR is the primary obstacle to achieving a signed FTAA agreement by January 2005. The protection of the mutual economic interest of its consortium is the primary reason for disagreement on a treaty. To add to the complexity of the situation, MERCOSUR is also courting the membership and support of nations in the Andean region. Obviously, as the nations most directly affected by narcoterrorism, their support is vital for FTAA to work. As the cornerstone to the economic policy in the region, a delay or no agreement would be devastating to the overall strategy of the U.S.⁵⁴ The desired result is reaching an agreement that supports everyone's interest. To assist in achieving this solution, the U.S. could additionally support MERCOSUR's desire to create a southern economic zone. The potential windfall could be a unified, multilateral effort that builds economies and a regional security structure that protects mutual economic interest.

More daunting is the risk to democracy in Venezuela. President Chavez faces a real threat to his Presidency in Venezuela. His control over the governing party, leftist rhetoric, support for Cuba and Libya, and dissenting vote on the Inter-American Democratic Charter potentially undermines democracy. The government in Venezuela is a constitutionally based democracy, but President Chavez could destroy these institutions.⁵⁵ If democracy fails, President Chavez may choose to protect narcoterrorists. The strongest mitigating factor is Venezuela's ties to the U.S. oil market. Nevertheless, encouraging Venezuela's democratic resolution to its problems is in everyone's interest and warrants continuous scrutiny.

CONCLUSION

Narcoterrorism is a den of iniquity that adversely affects the democratic, economic and social progress of Colombia, Brazil, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and Panama. Its continued existence affects the entire hemisphere and it contains the potential to grow into an increasingly more dangerous transnational threat. The United States must recognize that it cannot achieve the national ends delineated in its National Drug Strategy and Strategy for Combating Terrorism unless it approaches the solution in a comprehensive, multilateral approach with their South American partners.

The solution outlined in this paper provides a unified effort, built on the success of Plan Colombia and modified to develop a balanced approach to achieve the ends of Drugs, Development and Democracy. To ensure a common vision of the problem narcoterrorism is defined as the melding of drug lords, insurgents and terrorist. An explanation of Plan Colombia

points out the exportable successes that provide the basis for an adjusted strategy. To better propagate the new strategy, short falls identified in the ways and means of the U.S. National Strategies on Drugs and Combating Terrorism are incorporated into a solution and formulated around the framework of the 4D's (Deny, Diminish, Defeat, and Defend). This not only assures a detailed solution, but also synergy between the two national strategies.

Inside this blueprint is a discussion of the specific ways and means to achieve the end of narcoterrorism. These include the successes of Plan Colombia and the integration of specific enablers: a leading organization through the Organization of American States, reinforcing resources to build economies such as the Free Trade of the Americas Act and the Millennium Challenge development account, and the inclusion of mutually supporting democratic and security efforts. Finally, the analysis concludes by identifying MERCOSUR and Venezuela as potential problems to be mitigated.

The key to strengthening democracies is socio-economic development and security to the people of the nations intimidated by narcoterrorism. Plan Colombia does provide a strategy with proven policies that work and produce results. However, these policies must be complimented by new tactics, with regional and global synchronization to ensure the type of consistent pressure that will deny, diminish and defeat narcoterrorism in South America. Only then can the U.S. achieve the ends of eradication of drugs (narcoterrorists), sustained socio-economic development, and the strengthening of democracies in the region.

WORD COUNT: 5, 866

ENDNOTES

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¹³ Ibid, 1.

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¹⁸ Ibid, 5-7.

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²⁰ Ibid, 9-10.

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²² "After the Cold War, in the Wake of Terror. Bush II in the Americas," *NACLA Report on the Americas* 35, no. 3 (November/December 2001): 37 [database on-line]; available from ProQuest; Accessed 23 September 2003.

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²⁴ K. Larry Storrs and Connie Veillette, *Andean Regional Initiative (ARI): FY 2003 Supplemental and FY 2004 Assistance for Colombia and Neighbors*. Report for Congress (Washington, D.C.: Foreign Affairs, Defense and Trade Division, July 25, 2003) 42.

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⁵² Fontela, viii.

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⁵⁴ Hsiang, 63.

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